

comparatively not numerous. You may have seen a man of this vigorous character in a state of indecision concerning some affair in which it was necessary for him to determine, because it was necessary for him to act. But in this case, his manner would assure you that he would not remain long undecided; you would wonder if you found him still balancing and hesitating the next day. If he explained his thoughts, you would perceive that their clear process, evidently at each effort gaining something toward the result, must certainly reach it ere long. The deliberation of such mind is a very different thing from the fluctuation of one whose second thinking only upsets the first, and whose third confounds both. To *know how* to obtain a determination, is one of the first requisites and indications of a rationally decisive character.

When the decision was arrived at, and a plan of action approved, you would feel an assurance that something would absolutely be done. It is characteristic of such a mind, to think for effect; and the pleasure of escaping from temporary doubt gives an additional impulse to the force with which it is carried into action. The man will not re-examine his conclusions with endless repetition, and he will not be delayed long by consulting other persons, after he had ceased to consult himself. He cannot bear to sit still among unexecuted decisions and unattempted projects. We wait to hear of his achievements, and are confident we shall not wait long. The possibility or the means may not be obvious to us, but we know that everything will be attempted, and that a spirit of such determined will is like a river, which, in whatever manner it is obstructed, will make its way somewhere. It must have cost Cæsar many anxious hours of deliberation, before he decided to pass the Rubicon; but it is probable he suffered but few to elapse between the decision and the execution.\* And any one of his friends, who should

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\* The Rubicon was a small stream which formed the boundary between Italy and Cisalpine Gaul. When Cæsar arrived at its banks on his way to Rome "his reflections," says Plutarch, "became more interesting in proportion as the danger grew near. At last, upon some sudden impulse, bidding adieu to his reasonings, and plunging into the abyss of futurity, in the words of those who embark in doubtful and arduous enterprises, he cried out, 'The die is cast!' and immediately passed the river."—PLUTARCH'S  
 \*\* *Lives; Cæsar.*"